

Group News



*** 2023 * *November* * 2023 ***

The monthly magazine for:

Guisborough URC

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Our churches are members of the Cleveland Pastorate

Part of the URC Northern Synod – www.urch-northernsynod.org.uk

www.eastclevelandurc.org.uk

Pastoral Letter

'In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent His Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.'

1 John 4 v10

One of the big advertising phrases in vogue today is. 'We are passionate about...'. So what is it that *we* are passionate about? The question was put in a sermon that I read recently and it opened up a facet of faith that I'd never considered before, - the idea of a God who is passionate about us! The word comes from the Greek meaning emotion or sacrifice. To care passionately about someone means that we are ready to suffer for them, to make personal sacrifices to secure their happiness.

Such is the love that God has for us. It's not just a vague feeling of benevolence or a general concern and affection; it's a passionate and consuming love that gave everything, even His own Son to restore our broken relationship with Him; to draw us closer to Himself. It's the 'love divine all love excelling' spoken of by the hymn writer, 'the love that will not let us go'.

Maybe we're not used to thinking of God in those terms, - but we should be, for the wonder of the gospel is not simply that God loves us, but that he loves us *passionately!*

May the Lord bless you and keep you

Shalom

Jan

Such A Special Occasion!

Today, for the first time, the 7 churches of our pastorate met together for worship....and what a glorious occasion it was. Seeing so many friends, in a full church, singing and praising God was truly magic!

We met our new Moderator for the first time, - Rev. Kim Plumpton, - and her service, including Communion was special, - so much so that we're in the process of booking her for next year!

I hope you all feel, as I do, that worshipping together as we did was a wonderful time, and that, at least once a year we should join together, worship together and share food together.

It was really rewarding to see so many people from each of the different churches, chatting together after the service whilst sharing the faith lunch, which folk had so generously provided.

My grateful thanks go to all those who worked tirelessly to make sure that all the arrangements went smoothly, especially those who made sure that the tea and coffee were freely available and the clearing away and washing up completed without hassle.

Already looking forward, with anticipation, to next year!

Jan



Synod Prayers

5th November

Cromer Avenue, Gateshead; Denewell Avenue, Gateshead; Bethel, Christ Church, Stanley; Chester-le-Street; Waddington Street, Durham; the Revd Marcus Hargis; Youth Pioneer Worker Esther Bailey

12 November

Remembrance Sunday

19 November

Inter Faith Week

26 November

St Andrew's, Dawson Street, Crook; the Revd Christopher Humble



Northern Synod Report

Northern Synod met on Saturday 14th October at Stockton Road URC, Sunderland. Some were missing due to COVID and other illness.

Worship was led by Lucy Cooke our Learning and Development Officer but prepared by our friend Rev. Jane Rowell. She used Psalm 122, "I was glad", which reminded me of the wonderful anthem by Parry. One line is particularly poignant at this time, "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; peace be within thy walls."

We watched a video about the Synod delegation to Greenbelt. If you would like to go next year contact Lucy. I am thinking of going, if I can take Lilljana.

News of people and places included mention of our friends, Eric Ripplingham and Charles Price, who died this year, and there were prayers for their friends and family. I was reminded of my old friend Howard Taylor, long time Secretary of Ryton URC and a big influence on me in my childhood years. Rachel Poolman, from the St Cuthbert's Centre ministry on Holy Island, has had to retire on health grounds. She too has had a profound influence on my faith since I first met her in the ladies at General Assembly. We signed a card for her.

There were lots of new appointments. Rev. Alex Mabbs is our new green apostle and Helen Bert is our new Synod Safeguarding Office. I will need to update our posters with her contact details. The Synod Trust are looking for new members, especially women and those from the South of the Synod. If you have any financial background or knowledge they would love to hear from you. Please don't ask me, I struggle with my own accounts. We talked about the Theos Report. Have you read it yet? Every church is getting a copy to pass round.

Two of our Community projects have won awards in the last 2 years and we heard from Roker Life and Wooler Warm Hub. The emphasis was that the church members didn't do it all themselves but formed partnerships with their community and other organisations to do the work. We had time for discussion where we shared good ideas and discussed what we could do differently to encourage our smaller churches to get involved in the community. Please don't forget the Tiny Grants available from Rev. Kate

Hackett, of Mission Forum. She suggested we look for “Where is God?” and join in. Thinks small and plant a seed, then watch it grow.

In the afternoon we discussed “Why we worship?” and how we can talk to others about our faith. In our group we felt that it was a two way process, learning from others as they learn from us. We asked if actions speak louder than words? And one person just said, “Don’t be so British!.” We tend to avoid politics and religion in conversation, even though they are subjects at the centre of how we live our lives. Other suggestions were to Practice Thankfulness, “What has God done for me?” and to admit to the struggle, “Where is God in the present situation?”

Ministries and Development are starting a new pilot scheme for refunding preaching fees. The new recommended amount is £40 but you can still pay what you can afford. Synod voted for an option to pay for 2 services a month, for every church, for every type of preacher/ worship leader, not already salaried to do this. Travel expenses are still the responsibility of the local church.

Synod is still looking for a Church and Society Advocate after Rev. Ken Harris retired. If you feel called please contact Rev. Kate Hackett. Antiracism training is being introduced for office holders in the URC starting at the top. It is hoped that eventually all members will participate in some way, especially looking at ‘Unconscious bias.’ which is hard to recognise because it is unconscious.

Our overall theme for Synod this time was “Flourishing in Local Churches.” What can we do to promote flourishing in our own churches? What are we good at and where can we improve? The Theos Report ‘URC- A paradoxical church at a crossroads.’ will supply much food for thought and discussion. Let’s use this wonderful tool to look at ourselves afresh and to encourage each other to flourish, to the Glory of God and in the service of our community. Seek the heart and will of God and work for His Kingdom, we are urged.

Northern Synod is ready to support you in all this.

Donna Moore.

Guisborough

My apologies for this being such a personal story!

A few weeks ago we travelled to Santorini for our son Ewan's wedding. Ewan and Paola were determined that it should be a memorable event and indeed it was. Paola's uncle, a preacher from Ecuador, took the service in both Spanish and in English and it was held outdoors on the roof of the wedding venue on a cliff edge over-looking the sea. As expected the weather was fine, sunny with no clouds and 28 degrees C. After the usual spectacular sunset, there followed a fine meal, speeches, and lively dancing with an Hispanic flavour. Having been instructed I remembered to pass on good wishes from Guisborough URC.

Santorini is an interesting island. It lies 150 miles south of Athens almost within site of Crete. An advanced civilization (the Minoan) was a thriving 4,000 years ago. Then in about 1,600 BC a massive volcanic eruption destroyed most of the island creating a huge, deep caldera which is now visited by hordes of tourists. Many of the city states round the Aegean Sea, the civilisation recorded in Homer's Iliad and Odyssey, were wiped out by tsunamis and the development of western civilisation was likely set back several hundred years. In the last 50 years excavations have uncovered the original city of Akrotiri buried under volcanic ash. A bit like Pompei, but Akrotiri was preserved 3,600 years ago. The gap between Akrotiri and Pompei is as big as the gap between us and Pompei. The remains of Santorini (half of it was blown to the heavens) was only resettled in about 800 BC, probably by settlers from Sparta and there are impressive ruins of the neo-classical city on

	Welcome	Vestry/notices	Communion
5th November	Sandra	Martin	Joyce
12th November	Joyce	Peter	
19th November	Peter	Maureen	
26th November	Ray	Joyce	Jenny
3th December	Jenny	Ray	

the mountains above Akrotiri. It's interesting to reflect on how a natural disaster wiped out a civilisation – and now we have global warming, not a natural disaster but a man-made one, and we may be heading the same way!

Volcanic activity still goes on. In 1956 a major earthquake destroyed or badly damaged 50% of the houses on Santorini. The economy became so depressed that about half the population chose to leave. But in recent times the economy has boomed entirely due to tourism and the population is now about 15,000. Cruise ships arrive virtually daily in the summer, sometimes two or three in one day, often carrying 3,000 – 5,000 tourists who spend just a few hours sightseeing on the island. The environmental damage is immense and for me the whole situation was totally surreal. But it provides a living for the population!

We were lucky to be able to spend a week on Santorini, and so happy that the wedding went so well.

James Robertson

Guisborough Calendar

Weekly

Thursday	from 9.30am	Coffee in Church Hall
	from 10.30am	Church open for private prayer
	11.30am	Thursday Prayers led by Maureen and Ray. Details on church notice board

Christmas at Guisborough

Sunday 24th December

All are invited to a short *Christmas morning* service here at Guisborough at 10am led by Dr Donna Moore.

Sunday 31st December

There will be no service here but we are invited to Marton to share their New Year's Eve service.

St Andrew's

Soup Lunch

Thank you to everyone who helped to make the Soup Lunch on Saturday 14th October so enjoyable. £133.00 was raised for Middlesbrough Food Bank for which they are very grateful.

Advance Notice

Our annual Toy Service is to be held on Sunday 10th December at our usual time of 10.00am. We would be very grateful for donations of new toys for deserving children. Thank you.

News from Uganda

My dear friends.

I was delighted to receive your news. My health has been declining over time. There was time when I was too weak to get out of bed and walk, and overwhelmed with self-pity, but God's love, grace and care, gives me the strength I need to do something for myself. Apart from my chronic chest problem there are several other non-communicable health issues my body has to deal with, but it is amazing how our Great Physician enables my body and soul to cope with the incapacity.

Apophia (niece) had a baby girl in September and they are doing well. Moses (nephew) wed Fortune on 8th October but I was not well enough to attend. Like us, Rosemary is shocked by world atrocities, but says we must look to God for help, comfort and deliverance. God never forsakes His people. Christian greetings to everyone who remembers me at St. Andrews. Stay safe in the loving arms of our mighty Unchangeable Friend.

With all my love,
Rosemary.

Coffee for Charity

10th September	Boys' Brigade	£44.95
17th September	Relief for Morocco/Libya Disaster	£20.00
24th September	Relief for Morocco/Libya Disaster	£17.00
1st October	Middlesbrough Food Bank	£25.00
8th October	Boys' Brigade	£30.95

Remembrance Day



Lest We Forget

The 11th hour on the 11th day of the 11th month

Preachers

Marion	Guisborough	Redcar
10.00am	10.00am	10.30am
5-Nov Chris Eddowes	Donna Moore Communion	Redcar Baptist
12-Nov MarionWT Parade	Bill Reynolds	Redcar Baptist
19-Nov Jan Harper Communion	Donna Moore Meeting	Redcar Baptist
26-Nov MarionWT	Keith Martin	Redcar Baptist
3-Dec Jan Harper Meeting	Donna Moore Communion	Redcar Baptist

Material for the December/January Magazine to church editors by
Sunday 12th November please

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